



## Facility Bill/Charge Audit Policy

### **Policy**

It is the policy of Fallon Community Health Plan (FCHP) to verify that charges billed are documented, ordered and accurate. Billing audits reconcile charge data on a hospital's bill with said hospital's medical and clinical documentation. FCHP's focus during these audits is to determine whether or not the hospital's health and clinical documentation substantiates or supports the bill and that FCHP has paid the claim accurately. Signed Business Associate Agreements are obtained for any vendor conducting audits on our behalf.

- In general audits are conducted with final paid dates in the current or previous calendar year.
- Plan members have agreed to give the Plan the right to obtain from any source all medical records or other information that is needed, in accordance with the Plan Evidence(s) of Coverage. If this Plan Member release is in conflict with any other law or regulation governing release of medical information, the Provider will identify the conflict and work with the Plan to resolve the conflict.
- FCHP will request an itemized bill for claims meeting the audit criteria. Itemization will be sent within 10 days of the request.
- If selected for audit the Hospital Representative should respond to the audit request within 14 days and, unless otherwise agreed upon by both parties, schedule the audit within 45 days of the initial request at a mutually agreed date and time. There is a 15 days prior notice requirement for cancellation by either party.
- Hospitals will designate an individual(s) to coordinate all billing audit activities. Duties of an audit coordinator include, but are not limited to, the following areas:
  - A. Scheduling audits;
  - B. Advising other provider personnel/departments of pending audits;
  - C. Verifying that the auditor is an authorized representative of FCHP;
  - D. Gathering the necessary documents for the audit and ensuring that the health record is complete and in order;
  - E. Coordinating the auditor's requests for information; the space in which to the audit will be conducted; and, the access to records and provider personnel;
  - F. Orienting auditors to record documentation, provider specific conventions, and provider billing practices and policies;
  - G. Acting as a liaison between the auditor and other provider personnel;
  - H. Making available any and all charge master data for reference by FCHP's audit designee;
  - I. Conducting an exit interview with the auditor to answer questions and review audit findings;
  - J. Reviewing the auditor's final written report and following up on any charges still in question or dispute;
  - K. Arranging for any required adjustment(s) to bills and/or issuing refunds to FCHP.
- These guidelines are for billing audits that relate to the documentation and support of charges included in or omitted from a bill. This policy does not address questions concerning the level or scope of health necessity for the services provided to the patient.
- FCHP expects that the medical record will be complete and in order. The Hospital Representative should insure that medical records are complete and in order before the

- audit commences. Any additional documentation (i.e. ancillary records and/or logs) that supports billed charges will be available at the commencement of the audit. Source documents will serve to provide further detail but should be supported by the clinical picture and will not conflict with specific documentation in the medical record.
- If the Hospital Representative identifies that an auditor may have problems accessing records, the Hospital Representative shall notify the auditor prior to the scheduled date of audit to reschedule such audit date. Providers shall supply the auditor and FCHP with any and all information that could affect the efficiency of the audit once the auditor is on-site.
  - Documented policies and procedures should be available for review upon request or at the time of the on-site audit. The Hospital Representative will be available to the auditor(s) during the on-site visit to clarify charge descriptions, answer questions and research issues. Requests for additional information and supporting documentation will be provided within a reasonable amount of time not to exceed 30 days. Information and documentation that is not received within 30 days of receipt of audit findings will not be reviewed.
  - Undercharges are documented services that were billed on the original audited claim but not billed to the full extent of the services provided. The net adjustment on the audit report will reflect unsupported and undercharges. A corrected claim form will not be required. The provider is expected to present any and all under billing to FCHP's audit designee for review before the audit commences. All unsupported or unbilled charges identified and verified by both audit parties will be recognized, evaluated, recorded or presented in a final report. Under billing that is not submitted for review before the audit commences will not be recognized, evaluated or recorded in the final audit report.
  - Late charges are charges that were not submitted on the original claim. Late charges will be considered for payment only if they are presented before the on-site audit commences so that charges can be fully evaluated at the time of the on-site review. A corrected claim form will be required for any late charges that have been verified. The audit process is not intended to present an opportunity for providers to submit for late charges. All late charges need to be formally submitted to FCHP through the claim submission process. Late billing that is not submitted within six months of discharge and prior to an audit commencing will not be recognized, evaluated or recorded in the final audit report. Such late charges will not be paid by FCHP.
  - A written preliminary report of audit findings should be a part of each audit. An exit interview will be offered to the provider and, if the provider waives the exit conference, the auditor will note that decision in the written report. The Hospital is expected to present supporting documentation before adjustments to the preliminary audit findings are made. Resolution of any discrepancies, questions, or errors that have been identified in the audit shall occur within 30 days of the audit. Both parties will agree to respond to calls and emails in a timely manner and work toward closure of audits within 30 calendar days of the on-site audit or receipt of the preliminary findings. All audit findings will stand if provider fails to provide supporting documentation or to communicate agreement with audit findings within 30 days of the audit. Audit results are final once the parties agree to the audit findings or after thirty (30) days elapses post audit.
  - Any finding that cannot be resolved between the Provider's representative and FCHP's audit representative will be submitted to the payer as a disputed charge.
  - Audit results are final once the parties agree to the audit findings or after thirty (30) days elapses post audit and audits will not be re-opened for any reason.
  - Disputed charges will be documented in the audit report with supporting documentation for the dispute. FCHP or its designee while on-site or upon request shall

have access to records, including but not limited to securing copies of the record, to support the audit findings. Disputed charges will be addressed through the FCHP Provider Appeal Process. An initial notification letter will be sent to the facility advising that the Plan has received the dispute and request that any pertinent medical documentation supporting their claim is sent to the Provider Appeals Dept. within 45 business days of receipt of the notification. All cases will be held until requested documentation is received or for 50 business days from the date of the notification letter, whichever is sooner. At which time, the case is forwarded to the Plan Medical Director for review. Upon review of the available information, the Plan Medical Director may determine that the findings are **valid**, in which monies will be recouped from the facility, or **not-valid**, in which no further action will be taken and the claim will not be adjusted further for those disputed charges. The facility and FCHP's audit designee will be notified in writing of the Plan determination and rationale for the determination. The determination is final and binding and in keeping with the provisions of your contract with FCHP. This review process is considered your right to appeal. No additional appeal will be considered.

- All personnel involved in the audit shall maintain a professional courteous manner and shall resolve all misunderstandings amicably and directly with each other if at all possible.
- Parties to an audit shall strive to eliminate ongoing problems or questions whenever possible as part of the audit process.
- Any overpayment identified in the audit results that is owed to FCHP shall be settled by FCHP and the provider within a reasonable period of time not to exceed 30 days after the audit unless FCHP and the provider agree otherwise.
- Provider will not be paid audit fee or copy fees associated with any of the reviews.
- Facilities may not bill the member for any reimbursement differences that result from the audit.

## **Benefits application**

### **Commercial**

- FCHP Direct Care/FCHP Select Care
- Commonwealth Care
- Companion Care
- FCHP MassHealth
- Major Medical
- Fallon Preferred Care

### **Senior Plan**

- Fallon Senior Plan™
- Fallon Senior Plan Preferred

## **Reimbursement**

FCHP requires accurate and appropriate documentation to support charges billed.

## **Billing/coding guidelines**

Facilities are expected to have the necessary documentation to support billed charges as required by FCHP and consistent with industry standards.

This policy applies to all services rendered to FCHP members.

## **Place of service**

This policy applies to all facilities.

## **Policy history**

Origination date: 03/01/09  
Previous revision date(s): N/A  
Connection date & details: 01/1/09; new policy.

*This payment policy has been developed to provide information regarding general billing, coding and documentation guidelines for FCHP. Even though this payment policy may indicate that a particular service or supply is considered covered, specific provider contract terms and/or member individual benefit plans may apply and this policy is not a guarantee of payment. FCHP reserves the right to apply this payment policy to all FCHP companies and subsidiaries.*